GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:715
ANSWERED ON:29.02.2000
LITERACY RATE
MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has made any remarks regarding literacy in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government have urged upon the State Government to take necessary steps to examine the report and to improve the literacy rate; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOSURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSING RAO GAIKWAD PATIL)

(a) & (b): Yes, sir. The World Bank in their Report of January 31, 2000 has inter-alia observed " There is significant rise in literacy rates within the last decade". From 1991 to 1997 the overall literacy rate increased from 52% to 64 %, rising from 64% to 73% for males, and from 39% to 50% for females, according the NSS. Progressis still slow but the number of illiterates (aged seven years and above), which had actually risen from 1981 to 1991, appears to have begun to decline in the 1990s. Among the states, some of the poorest, for example Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan registered significant improvements i n literacy Rajasthan, registered significant improvements in literacy albeit from low bases. In most of these states, female literacy rose even faster than overall literacy.

Although India has raised literacy rates, it still has a long way to go. Many countries, including China and Indonesia, have overtaken India in literacy rates â€¦ If India's literacy rate continues to grow at the current rate of 2.75% p.a., it will still take 16 years before India catches up with Sri Lanka's current literacy rate of 90%, and even than about 120 million persons will still be illiterate".

(c): No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.